GOD's VOICE *in the* EARTHQUAKE;

OR,

A ſerious Admonition to a Sinful World.

A

SERMON,

Preached in the Pariſh Church of

SHEFFIELD,

On SUNDAY *December* 7, 1755.

By NATHANAEL DODGE, *Curate of* SHEFFIELD, *and Miniſter of* GREASBROUGH *Chapel.*

Rent your Hearts and not your Garments, and turn unto the LORD *your* GOD. JOEL ii. 13.

And there was a great Earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince Men were upon the Earth; ſo mighty an Earthquake, and ſo great. REV. xvi. 18.

Y O R K:

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To the GENTLEMEN—the CUTLERS, and all other—the INHABITANTS of the Town and Pariſh of *SHEFFIELD.*

My Dear Friends,

IF you require, from Me, *the Reaſon of my ſending the following plain* SERMON *abroad, it is* This, viz. *Many who heard it, deſired to have it made public, as well for their own further* BENEFIT, *as for the* BENEFIT *of* Thoſe, *who did not. How far it may contribute to theſe* Purpoſes, *is known, only, to* GOD. *I can truly ſay, that, The ſame* Upright INTENTION, *which directed the* Penning *and* Preaching *of* it, *is ſteddily purſued in its* PUBLICATION.——*If it ſhould prove a* Mean *in the Hand of* GOD, *to ſtir* Mankind *up to conſider the great Deſign of Their* BEING *and the important Concerns of their* SOULS, *every* End *will be anſwered, and I ſhall greatly rejoice.*——*I am too ſenſible of My own great* Weakneſs, *and other* Defects, *to expect, or* even *hope, to eſcape* Cenſure. *But,* None of theſe Things move me——neither do I count *any Thing* dear, ſo I may finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and ſerve my Generation according to the Will of GOD. *To* HIM, only, *I am accountable; and my Comfort is, that, altho' my Abilities be much inferior unto* Many *Others; yet, ſuch as They are, if* They *be uſed to the Purpoſes for which* They *were given, I ſhall not loſe my Reward.*——*If the* Reader *will be pleaſed to conſider the* Admonition *rather than the* Perſon *who gives* it, *or the* Manner *in which* it *is given,—I deſire no more.*—— *And may the* Bleſſing *of* GOD *accompany it, to His everlaſting* BENEFIT.

And, HERE, *I will not loſe the* Opportunity *offered me, of Teſtifying, before the World, the Deep* Senſe *I have of the* Obligations *laid upon me, by a certain Moſt* HONOURABLE *Perſon; as well as, by* YOURSELVES, *in thoſe Many and Repeated* Favours, *I have received at* Your *Hands; I mean, in that* Generous Aſſiſtance, YOU *have lent, on* Many Occaſions, *to alleviate the great Difficulties I have laboured under, by reaſon of a large Family and a ſlender Proviſion—and, particularly, by* That *kind* Hand, *from which, about Two Years ago, I received a conſiderable* Benefaction, *tho' I never knew to the preſent Time (nor do I yet know) from whence it came——I pray* GOD *to reward* Your Kindneſs *with a large Increaſe of all Spiritual Bleſſings.*

If You have received any Benefit *from my* LABOURS, *I am bound to Bleſs* GOD *for that* Providence *which brought Me among You. I could wiſh*, for Your Sakes, *that it had been greater in the* Degree, *and more univerſal in the* Extent. *But ſo unreaſonable are* ſome, *that They will not receive a* Bleſſing, *becauſe They like not the* Hand *that offers it. They take up idle* Prejudices *unaccountably, and comply with the* Suggeſtions *of the* Enemy, *to their own undoing. For thoſe* Prejudices *are nothing but* Suggeſtions of the Devil, *and calculated to hinder the Word of* GOD *from taking effect. If* ſuch *Perſons have not*, hitherto, *conſidered the Matter in* this View—*I pray* GOD *to open their Eyes, that They may, at length, ſee it; and no longer ſtand in the* Way *of their own* Happineſs, *nor do ſuch a* grievous Injury *to Their own* SOULS.

I deſire Your *Prayers—that I may be faithful to the* Truſt *repoſed in me——that I may freely teſtify The* GOSPEL *of the* GRACE *of* GOD—*that I may be an happy* Inſtrument *of awakening* dead SINNERS—*and of bringing* MANY *unto* CHRIST, WHERE—*and in* WHOM alone, *They may find* PARDON

and

and PEACE. For HE is made of GOD unto us, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.

And, now, Brethren, I commend You unto GOD and to the Word of HIS Grace, which is able to build You up, and to give You an Inheritance among all Them that are ſanctified; *and I am, in the greateſt Sincerity,*

Your affectionate Friend

SHEFFIELD,
Dec. 15, 1755.

and obliged Servant,

N. D.

ISAIAH, XXVI. 11.

LORD, when thy Hand is lifted up, they will not ſee: But they ſhall ſee, and be aſhamed for their Envy at the People; yea the Fire of thine Enemies ſhall conſume them.

IF the Actions of Men be allowed to be a CRITERION, or STANDARD, whereby the Thoughts may be diſcerned or known —— None can look about them in the World, but muſt be inclined to think of the GENERALITY, that they reſemble *thoſe*, mentioned by the Prophet, who ſaid,—*We have made a Covenant with Death; and with Hell are we at Agreement; when the overflowing Scourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come unto us.* [a]

2. It is a *lamentable* Conſideration, that GOD's MERCIES and JUDGMENTS are, *ſeldom*, regarded; —— And — I fear — *leſs* underſtood. Hence, thoſe Bleſſings conferred upon them, are, with reſpect to THE MANY —— and, hitherto, have been —— *ineffectual* to the Purpoſes *they* were intended to ſerve; —— I mean, they are *ſeldom* received in a way of *Gratitude* and *Thankſgiving* to the Author and Donor of them; or put, *after they are received*, to *thoſe* Uſes, for which they were given. —— On the contrary, we ſee them more

 tre-

[a] *Iſaiah*, xxviii. 15.

frequently abuſed, as Incentives to LUST, and perverted, by *moſt*, to their own UNDOING; like THOSE of whom the Prophet ſpeaks —— *The Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their Feaſts; but they regard not the Work of the* LORD, *nor the Operation of* HIS *Hands.* [b]

3. Nor have the THREATNINGS of GOD, whether in HIS WORD, or in thoſe *leſſer* CALAMITIES which have befallen us, been, as yet, productive of any GENERAL good EFFECT. —— For, *becauſe Sentence againſt an evil Work is not ſpeedily executed, the Hearts of the Sons of Men are fully ſet upon doing Evil.* [c] — They are not reſtrain'd from the moſt *horrid* Impieties.

4. Now, in ſuch Caſes, — and when nothing elſe will do, —— What can, reaſonably, be expected, but SEVERITY? GOD is obliged, (with Reverence I ſpeak it) for the Vindication of His own moſt *juſt* Authority, to put to — His HAND —— and to make His POWER known; —— to have Recourſe to His STRANGE WORK, as the laſt Method left HIM, to put a STOP to the *reigning* Wickedneſs of Men; —— I mean — to execute HIS THREATNED JUDGMENTS, *that the Inhabitants of the World may* ſee the Obliquity of Sin, and *learn Righteouſneſs* [d]. And, — indeed, — *to ſay the Truth*, — It ſeldom happens, that any Thing, ſhort of THIS, is ſufficient to convince the depraved Underſtandings of Men univerſally. *For if Favour be ſhewn to the Wicked, they will not learn Righteouſneſs: In the Land of Uprightneſs they will deal unjuſtly, and will not behold the Majeſty of the* LORD. [e]

5. But, *nevertheleſs*, ſuch is — and always hath been — the undeſerved MERCY of our GOD! That, before *Things* have come to EXTREMITIES, HE hath not left HIMSELF without WITNESS of HIS Unwillingneſs to deſtroy the SONS of

[b] *Iſaiah*, v. 12. [c] *Eccleſ.* viii, 11. [d] *Iſaiah*, xxvi, 9. [e] *Ibid*, 10.

of MEN: In thoſe frequent Notices of his DISPLEASURE, and in thoſe ſolemn WARNINGS, which (at certain Periods and in divers Manners) it hath pleaſed HIM to give; whether in HIS WORD, by his MESSENGERS the Prophets, or in thoſe leſſer EVILS which he hath actually inflicted: All WHICH, if *conſidered*, do ſufficiently and plainly intimate HIS Intentions;——and what WE may *juſtly* expect — unleſs, by a ſound REPENTANCE, — a real AMENDMENT, WE turn unto the LORD.

6. THUS—HE dealt with the old WORLD——Thus—HE dealt with SODOM——Thus—with the People of ISRAEL and JUDAH before he was glorified in their DESTRUCTION. And thus hath He dealt with Us in this KINGDOM. But, alas! GOD's repeated WARNINGS, and His JUDGMENTS threatned, have been, hitherto, ſo little conſidered, that we may, juſtly, take up the *Complaint* of the Prophet, in my Text, and ſay, *LORD, when thy Hand is lifted up, they will not ſee*; [f] and be apprehenſive of the Execution of that THREATNING which follows, viz. *But they ſhall ſee, and be aſhamed for their Envy at the People, yea the Fire of thine Enemies ſhall conſume them.* [g]

7. When WE hear of *ſtrange* and *unuſual* EVENTS, WE are apt to be ſurprized, and *almoſt* confounded at them. And no Wonder! becauſe, they have a certain natural *Tendency* to rouze the *moſt* Unthinking and Inattentive to *ſome* Degree of SERIOUSNESS and CONSIDERATION. But the great Misfortune is——that, though an Impreſſion be made, it is, *ſeldom*, of any *long* Continuance. The Reaſon is—The Finger of GOD is not diſcerned in thoſe PROVIDENCES.—So that if ſuch *Occurrences* do not *immediately* concern ourſelves, (tho' they affect us a *little* and for a *ſhort* Time, yet) we ſuffer ourſelves to be diverted *from conſidering them*, by

[f] *Iſaiah*, xxvi. 11. [g] *Ibid.*

ſuch Objects as are *more* pleaſing and agreeable to the ſenſitive Appetite; and *ſo* loſe the Benefit of *that* Inſtruction, which might, *otherwiſe*, have been gathered from thoſe PROVIDENCES.——Nay—if WE be, ſomehow or other, *more nearly and intimately* concerned in them—whether in reſpect of LIFE—ESTATE—or RELATIONS—yet ſo infatuated are we, EVEN IN THIS CASE, that we are unwilling to ſee and acknowledge the HAND of GOD, or to inquire into the *Cauſes*, on *our* Part, of GOD's *thus* dealing with us. So that though the *Impreſſion* ſuch EVENTS make, be *deep*—yet—for want of a right *Apprehenſion* of, and *Improvement* under, THEM, they *ſeldom* leave Men *better* than they found them.

8. WE are, at preſent, juſtly alarm'd with an Account of—one of the moſt *dire* EVENTS—one of the *moſt* extraordinary CALAMITIES—and one of the *moſt* ſignal Inſtances of GOD's dreadful DISPLEASURE—that any Nation in EUROPE ever felt.——*LISBON*—a *populous* City—and the *Metropolis* of the Kingdom of PORTUGAL—utterly deſtroy'd by an EARTHQUAKE—and *many* Thouſands of the INHABITANTS buried in the *Ruins*—involved in the *common* DESTRUCTION [a].——A ſudden and a fatal *Stroke!* An awful and unexpected *Change!*

9. WE

[a] By the lateſt Accounts received before the Penning and Preaching of this SERMON, the whole CITY was ſaid to be deſtroyed——and that 10,000, other Accounts ſaid 100,000, of the INHABITANTS were buried in the *Ruins*. And, HERE, I muſt not omit taking Notice of the *Time* and other *Circumſtances* when this EVENT happened. It is a Thing well known, that when there are a ſufficient Number of miſerable Creatures in the Priſon of the INQUISITION, who ſurvive their Tortures——the *Inquiſitors General* do fix the Time of EXECUTION, which they call an ACT of FAITH. At which TIME the poor unhappy SUFFERERS are brought forth out of their diſmal Dungeons, dreſſed in Coats made for the Purpoſe, with *Devils*—*Flames*—and other frightful *Figures* painted upon them—and, after they have been made a public SPECTACLE, are delivered over to the CIVIL MAGISTRATE—to be put to *Death*; which hath often been done in a *moſt* cruel and barbarous Manner.——Now as they are taught that HERESY

is

9. We have great Reaſon to fear, that *many* of them were ill prepared for ſuch a Providence—and—ſhudder with *Horror* to think, what is become of their Souls. Heedleſs and Inconſiderate Creatures! If they had been told what ſhould come to paſs, They, perhaps, would not have received the Meſſage—But—Now it is actually come upon Them—and—they are gone into everlaſting Habitations.——They were ſwept away before they were aware, and are gone into the Pit, from whence there is no Redemption—Alas! poor Souls! They had Eyes indeed, but ſaw not—Ears, but heard not—being purpoſely kept *in* Darkneſs; and bred in the *moſt groſs* Superſtition, under the *baneful* Influence of a corrupt Church, and the *Terrors* of a *moſt* bloody and barbarous Inquisition.

10. And as to the reſt of the Inhabitants, who had their Lives given them for a Prey—what *human* Heart can avoid being pained—when it conſiders their Diſtreſs? Theſe were oblig'd to flee *into* the Fields and Woods—naked *and* deſtitute!——They who, *before*, were ſo delicate, perhaps, as to be almoſt afraid of ſetting their *Foot* upon the Ground—Now expoſed to Hunger and Thirst—to the Inclemency of the Seaſons—and without Habitation.

All

is a damnable Sin, and that every one is a Heretic who is not of the *Romiſh Communion*——theſe impious *Mockeries* are intended, not only to ſtigmatize the Sufferers, but to intimidate the blind *Populace*, by perſuading them, that they are giving thoſe Obstinate Heretics up to the *Devil*, for the Sake of God and The Church. *Thus* do they ſerve God *juſt* in the ſame Manner as the People of *Iſrael* did, when they offered up their Children to Moloch.

The Celebration of this Horrid Solemnity, we are told, is always reſerv'd to grace the Feſtival of All Saints: However, it is ſaid, this *inhuman* Spectacle was to have been exhibited the *very* ſame Day in which the City was deſtroyed.

May the Eyes of *thoſe*, who remain in that *Kingdom*, be opened to ſee the Hand of God in that terrible Providence, together with the *Time* and *Circumſtances* when it happened; and, *thence*, be induced to put away that *Abomination* far from them!

All their RICHES and SPLENDOUR loſt—and THEMSELVES on a Level with the meaneſt of their VASSALS; *even* the KING *himſelf* acknowledges (as one of the Accounts tells us) that HE remains in a Tent—*without* Houſe—*without* Servants—*without* Subjects—*without* Money—*without* Bread.—*The Mirth of Tabrets is ceaſed from among them, the Noiſe of them that rejoice is ended, the Joy of the Harp is ceaſed* [b]. *The City is broken down, every Houſe is* (deſtroyed, or) *ſhut up, that no Man may come therein. All Joy is darkned, the Mirth of the Land is gone. In the City is left Deſolation, and the Gate is ſmitten with Deſtruction* [c].

11. So that we may take up thoſe Words of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in his *Lamentations*, and ſay—*How is the City become deſolate, that was full of People! ſhe ſitteth ſolitary! How is ſhe become as a Widow! ſhe that was Great among the Nations* [d]. *The* LORD *hath ſwallowed up their Habitations, and hath not pitied:* HE *hath thrown down*, in his Wrath, *the Strong-holds*; HE *hath brought them down to the Ground. Her Gates are ſunk into the Ground*; HE *hath broken her Bars*; *her King and her Princes are among the* Gentiles [e]. *The Tongue of the ſucking Child cleaveth to the Roof of his Mouth for Thirſt*; *the young Children aſk Bread, and no Man breaketh unto them. They that fed* delicately *are deſolate*; *they that were brought up in Scarlet, embrace Dunghills* [f].

12. But Lamentations are not *all* that we have to do on this *melancholy* Occaſion: For though the STROKE lighted *immediately* upon THEM, yet there is a VOICE in that PROVIDENCE unto all the NATIONS of the WORLD—particularly to the EUROPEAN Nations.——And—*I would to* GOD, that each of them might ſee, and acknowledge, the Hand of GOD in it!

13. WE,

[b] *Iſaiah*, xxiv. 8. [c] *Ib.* x. 11, 12. [d] *Lam.* i. 1. [e] *Ib.* ii. 2, 9. [f] *Ib.* iv. 4, 5.

13. We, in this Kingdom,—and, I may ſay, in this Town in particular—are *immediately* concerned; and may, perhaps, feel the Consequences of it for *Generations* to come; not only by reaſon of the great Losses our Merchants may ſuſtain at preſent—but alſo—by the *Interruption* of our Trade; which *before* found Employment for our Manufacturers, and furniſhed our Poor with Bread. On all which Accounts, and others that might be mentioned, it will, probably, be one of the moſt ſevere and home-felt Calamities, this Nation ever knew.

14. But, after *all*, we have *Reaſon* to acknowledge the *Goodneſs* of God, as well as the *Severity* of His *Juſtice*.—His Goodneſs, I ſay, in that He hath not deſtroyed *Us*, as He did Them [g]. *It is of the* Lord's *Mercies* alone *that we are not* utterly conſumed, *and becauſe his Compaſſions fail not* [h]—that we *alſo* are not given up to the *ſame* Deſtruction. For when God's Hand was lifted up, the *Blow*, for any Thing that we knew, might have fallen upon London as well as Lisbon. We had, perhaps, no more to plead than They—if you except Popery and the Inquisition; nay, perhaps, in ſome Reſpects, Our Sins are *more* aggravated; I mean by that *ſcandalous* Abuſe of the Gospel which is daily ſounding in our Ears, and may be read in our Houses,—which bleſſed Privilege they had not.

15. Let

g I mean here the Preſervation of this Kingdom and its Inhabitants in general. Though that merciful Providence, *particularly* ſhewn in the Preſervation of our Countrymen and other Proteſtants, reſiding at Lisbon, ought never to be forgotten. It hath always been uſual with them, it ſeems, upon Notice given to withdraw out of the City, the Day before an Act of Faith is to be exhibited—no doubt to ſecure themſelves from the *rude* Inſults of a *bigotted* Multitude, as well as to be out of the Way of thoſe Barbarities. Accordingly they had left *Liſbon* the Day before, by which Means they were happily reſcued from the Jaws of *Death*, and are *now* living Monuments of God's ſparing Mercy.—May they *always* remember—and *ever* act ſuitably unto it.

h *Lam.* iii. 22.

15. Let us, *therefore*, my dear Brethren! at length take Warning! and improve the Misfortunes of others to our *beſt* Advantage! Let us forſake our SINS, which are the procuring CAUSE of all thoſe DESOLATIONS which happen upon Earth.——Indeed—we have the *greateſt* Reaſon to bethink ourſelves! For who that hath conſidered GOD's *Providences* for ſome Time paſt can ſo much as queſtion whether GOD's *Judgments are abroad in the Earth?* Tho', *The Inhabitants of the World have not*, as yet, *learned Righteouſneſs*.——It would be *well* for Them if they had.——Nay—It would be *well* for them, if They would, at *length*, begin to learn it; before the deſtroying Angel ſweeps them away into the Land of Oblivion.

16. It hath been for ſome Time paſt the *Opinion* of MANY of the *ſoberer* Sort among us,—and—I think—that *Opinion* is not *ill grounded*——that GOD is angry with us, and that He hath ſhewn it in *many* Inſtances; tho' *Theſe* have been *ſo* tempered with MERCY, *as* to give Ground to hope that HIS Anger may, *yet*, be averted, if, by a *ſincere* REPENTANCE and REFORMATION, we could prevail upon ourſelves to turn unto the LORD.

17. It is not *long*, ſince we were engaged in a fruitleſs, unſucceſsful WAR, with our perfidious Neighbours and Enemies,—which was attended (under *Their* Influence) with a *moſt* unnatural REBELLION within our *own* Borders; whereby *thouſands* of Families were ruined,——reduced to *Extreme* Poverty and Want,—and, *Many* loſt their Lives.——To which we may add, The DISTEMPER among our *Horned Cattle*, which, for a Number of Years, raged among us—and *ſtill* remains,—tho' it be more gentle,—and—thro' the MERCY of God—*Leſs* Univerſal, than it hath been. I muſt alſo remind you of thoſe EARTHQUAKES which have alarmed, not only, the *Inhabitants* of our CAPITAL, but alſo,

Thoſe

Thoſe, of *other* Towns and Counties, within *this* Kingdom, in the Space of a few Years paſt: As well as our being upon the *Brink* of a freſh WAR, the *Conſequences* of which cannot *poſſibly* be known.

18. All theſe CALAMITIES have been *little* conſidered,—I pray GOD,—The preſent PROVIDENCE,—which is *ſtill more* ſevere, may, therefore, do the Work of the *Former*; that our Eyes may be opened to ſee—THE HAND of GOD—OUR SINS—and OUR DANGER, before we are *utterly* deſtroyed.

Theſe Three PARTICULARS are what, I intend, at preſent, to propoſe to your View, to aſſiſt you in the *Improvement* of This *awful* Diſpenſation.

And then, by a *more* particular *Application*, direct you to the *Proper* Means of averting the Wrath of GOD, which ſeems to be gone forth, for the Puniſhment of a wicked World.

Firſt, I am to aſſiſt you in the *Improvement* of this *awful* Diſpenſation of the *Divine* Providence, by offering to your Conſideration *thoſe* Three Things it naturally ſuggeſts, and which may be gathered from OUR *near* Concern in it, *viz.* The HAND of GOD——Thoſe SINS which may be look'd upon as the *procuring* CAUSE of *that* Judgment——and the DANGER we are *ſtill* expoſed unto, and may *juſtly* expect, *unleſs* we REFORM and AMEND.

1. The HAND of GOD.——One would think, *This* is ſo viſible, as to render every Thing unneceſſary, that might, *otherwiſe*, be produced, to evince the Truth of This Obſervation. And yet, Experience hath ſhewn in *ſimilar* Caſes, that it is not. Men will not judge concerning ſuch EVENTS, according to what they find in Their BIBLES, concerning

GOD's JUDGMENTS, and HIS Methods of Procedure, in antient Days; but will need be wiſe above what is written. They pretend to account for thoſe *ſurprizing* EVENTS in a *Natural* Way; to take off that *fearful* Apprehenſion of Their own Danger, which ariſes in the Minds of *Moſt*, when ſuch Things happen:——And—*Thus*—They do all They can to defeat the END of thoſe PROVIDENCES.

JUDGMENTS, inflicted upon a SINFUL WORLD, have ſomething *in them* ſo ſhocking to human Nature, that we *cannot* but be alarmed when we hear of them;—eſpecially if we be concerned in, or do apprehend Danger from, THEM. And we cannot but apprehend ourſelves in *Danger*, ſo long as we are conſcious of *thoſe* Things, in ourſelves, againſt which GOD's Judgments are threatned. Hence Men are ſo infatuated, as to be ready and willing, to look upon every *Occurrence* (tho' ever ſo remarkably dreadful) as the certain EFFECT of Natural CAUSES; and to avoid, as much as poſſible, conſidering them in the Light of JUDGMENTS, becauſe of *that* Uneaſineſs ſuch REFLECTIONS do neceſſarily create and produce in Them. So that, in *Theſe Caſes*, it may *juſtly* be ſaid of Them, *LORD, when thy Hand is lifted up They will not ſee.*

I might, HERE, ſhew you (if Time would permit) that Nature, which is *generally* ſpoken of, as if it were *ſome* kind of BEING—is *not* a BEING; But, in *other* Words—The Work, *or* Operation of God—or, a *Diſplay* of His POWER. That what are *uſually* called the LAWS of NATURE, *are*, if *rightly* underſtood, nothing *elſe* but GOD's WILL[h]—HIS

[h] Some ſpeak of THE LAWS of NATURE, as if they were certain Powers communicated to *Matter*, by the ALMIGHTY, in *the* Day of *its* Creation——By Virtue of which, without any *immediate* Interpoſition of the DIVINE Power, the ſeveral Parts of the MUNDANE Syſtem *do* maintain their COURSE——perform their FUNCTIONS———and, operate, as CAUSES, in the Production of their ſeveral EFFECTS, in *one* regular, *and* continued SERIES. This—if I miſtake not—is what, *they* are *ſometimes* pleaſed to call, GOD's general PROVIDENCE.

His bleſſed Will, that ſuch and ſuch Causes ſhall produce ſuch and ſuch Effects, in—the *Inanimate*—the *Vegetable*—and, the *Animal* Creation.——*That* this Power, and theſe Laws, are not in the Creature but in God; who directs all Causes, and all Events, to the *Purpoſe* of His own Glory, *and* the Good of his Creatures, by *His* Special Providence.——But I chuſe *rather* to urge Scripture, in Confirmation of *this* Point, as the Teſtimony of God is irrefragable.

I ſhall *only* produce a few Paſſages—tho' *many* might be produced—to ſhew—that Earthquakes are the *immediate* Effects of God's Hand——*that* they are *the* Messengers of *His* Wrath—and—*that*, Sin, the Corruption of Nations, *is* the Cause of *thoſe* Judgments. That, they are the immediate Effects of God's Hand, we learn, in the Book of *Job*—*It is GOD who removeth the Mountains—who ſhaketh the Earth out of its Place, and maketh the Pillars there-*

dence.—And to These have been aſcribed *all* thoſe remarkable Phœnomena, which, at *different* Periods, *and*, almoſt, *in* every Age, have commanded *the* Attention, *and* exerciſed the Pens of the Learned; who have, for the moſt Part, reſolved them into Nature, and endeavoured to account for them, upon the *Principles* of Reason and Philosophy.

I muſt own, their Sentiments *are* ingenious, *and* Philoſophical. But They who plead for a Special Providence muſt beg leave to reject *this* Doctrine, becauſe *they* apprehend,—the *Scriptures* look *another* Way; which, they eſteem—a *more* ſure *Foundation* than *any* human *hypothetical* Authority, whatſoever.—Now the Word of God teaches, *that* as God created *all* Things by his Word, ſo He upholdeth them by his Power——His immediate Power——that His Wisdom ruleth *over* all—and directeth all Events to *their* proper End——And, laſtly, that *thoſe* Calamities, which happen, are *ſent* for the Punishment of a wicked World. What hath been ſaid, doth not, in the leaſt, ſupercede Second Causes, but, refers *them* to *their* proper Place, viz. as *Inſtruments*, in God's Hand, for the effecting of *His* glorious Purpoſes; whereas, *thoſe*, who hold *the* former Opinion, do ſeem to reſt in Second Causes, without a *proper* Regard to the First.——For which Reaſons, *and*, becauſe *that* Doctrine, doth, in *its* Conſequences, *ſeem* to relax *the* Obligations to Virtue and Religion, we *are* induced to adhere to the Teſtimony of God, in thoſe Concluſions we make, *concerning* Extraordinary Events, ſuch as Earthquakes, &c.

of to tremble [n]. —— And in the *Pſalms*,—*The Voice of the* LORD *ſhaketh the Wilderneſs, yea, the* LORD *ſhaketh the Wilderneſs of* Kadeſh [o]. —— Once more, — in the Book of *Joel*, it is ſaid —— *The* LORD *alſo ſhall roar out of* Zion, *and utter his Voice from* Jeruſalem, *and the Heavens and the Earth ſhall ſhake*, &c. [p]

And, as they are the *immediate* Effects of God's Hand, ſo *alſo*, are *they*, the MESSENGERS of his WRATH—ſee the forecited Place, in the Book of *Job*—*Which removeth the Mountains and they know not; which overturneth them in his Anger* [q]. So alſo that Place in the Book of the Prophet *Iſaiah*—*Therefore I will ſhake the Heavens, and the Earth ſhall remove out of her Place, in the* WRATH *of the Lord of Hoſts, and in the Day of his fierce Anger.* [r]

In the laſt Place, we may learn that SIN the *Corruption* of Kingdoms, is the *procuring* CAUSE of *thoſe* Judgments. There is a *ſad*, but *true*, Picture of the *Wickedneſs* of *Iſrael*, and of the *Puniſhment* threatned againſt them, in the ſecond Chapter of *Iſaiah*; which may ſerve, as a ſufficient Confirmation of *this* Point alſo. It is ſpoken of them, *there*—by the Prophet—*Thou haſt forſaken thy People the Houſe of* Jacob, *becauſe they be repleniſhed from the Eaſt, and are Sooth-ſayers like the* Philiſtines, *and they pleaſe themſelves in the Children of Strangers. Their Land alſo is full of Silver and Gold, neither is there any End of their Treaſures; their Land alſo is full of Horſes, neither is there any End of their Chariots: Their Land alſo is full of Idols—they worſhip the Work of their own Hands, that which their own Fingers have made: And the mean Man boweth down, and the great Man humbleth himſelf* [s] — before them! Well, and what was the Conſequence of all this? Why the Prophet tells them, That,—*the Day of*

[n] *Job* ix. 5, 6. [o] *Pſal.* xxix. 8. [p] *Joel* iii. 16. [q] *Job* ix. 5. [r] *Iſaiah* xiii. 13. [s] *Iſaiah* ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

of the Lord of Hoſts ſhould be upon every one that is proud, and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low [t]. *And they ſhall go into the Holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth, for Fear of the Lord, and for the Glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the Earth* [u].——And, now, we are to conſider,

2. What *thoſe* SINS are, which have been, on OUR Part, the procuring CAUSE of the preſent *afflictive* Providence, ſo far as it concerns us.

And, here—I think—none can look, with any Degree of *Attention*, upon the general *Corruption* of Manners among us, but, muſt ſoon obſerve, *that* almoſt *univerſal* Contempt of God and Religion, among *all* Ranks *and* Degrees of Men. How *many* are there, who, *utterly*, deſpiſe *the* Ordinances *and* Inſtitutions of Religion?—Public *and* private Worſhip—who take *no* Care to bring up their Children *and* Servants, in the Nurture *and* Admonition of the LORD!—profane GOD's *holy* Name and his Sabbaths—deſpiſe his Miniſters—and, caſt *Contempt* upon his Word. *And ſhall not God viſit for theſe Things?*

It is on *ſuch* Accounts as *theſe*, My Dear Brethren! (with *Grief* of Heart I ſpeak it) that the *Hands* of God's Miniſters *are* weakned—that the Word of God is ſo *little* underſtood—and—that it hath no *greater* Effect upon the Conſciences of Men. *This is a rebellious People*, ſaith the Lord, *lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord,—which ſay to the Seers, See not, and to the Prophets, Prophecy not unto us right Things; ſpeak unto us ſmooth Things; prophecy Deceits. Get ye out of the Way, Turn aſide out of the Path, Cauſe the Holy One of* Iſrael *to ceaſe from before us* [a]. But the Sins, *more* particularly pointed out by *This* Providence, are

[t] *Iſaiah* ii. 12. [u] *Ibid.* 19. [a] *Ibid* xxx. 9, 10, 11.

are—PRIDE and COVETOUSNESS. PRIDE occaſioned by *Fulneſs* of Bread—and her *fatal* Attendants—LUXURY in every Kind—in Furniture—in Eating and Drinking—in Apparel—each of which have, of late, been carried to the utmoſt EXCESS—exceeding, *almoſt*, all the Bounds of Decency; and, far beyond the Examples of former Ages—UNCLEANNESS—WANTONNESS—and an eager Purſuit of every *Senſual* Gratification.———

COVETOUSNESS with HER Attendants —— a formidable Train! ſuch as INJUSTICE—FRAUD—RAPINE—OPPRESSION of the Poor, *and* the like——I have *only* Time to name them—and, therefore, it muſt be left to *your* Reflections and *mine*, how far, and in what Degree, each of us are concerned *in*, and chargeable *with*, theſe Vices. However, I muſt ſay, that *they* are *ſo* black in their Nature, and *ſo* terrible in *their* Conſequences, as to ſhock *our* Imagination to think on *them*, and to make our Ears to tingle to hear *them* mentioned. I ſaid, theſe Vices were *more* particularly pointed out by this Providence, for this Reaſon; becauſe of the *Loſs* of thoſe *very* Means by which *only* Men are enabled to procure ſenſual Gratifications; and for the obtaining of which, they are *often* tempted to break thro' all the Tyes of JUSTICE and HUMANITY. I am——

3. In the next Place, to put you in mind of that further JUDGMENT we may *juſtly* expect, and of the DANGER we are *ſtill* in, unleſs we do *actually* REPENT and AMEND.

We cannot—it is impoſſible we ſhould—be aſſured, that the ſame CALAMITY ſhall not happen unto us. But *This* we know——that the ſame *Calamity* (as well as others) have been inflicted on other Kingdoms and People for *their* Sins——and that we, for *this* Reaſon, can never be ſecure while the ſame SINS, or *worſe*, are found among *us*———

Nay,

Nay, we have Ground to expect the Execution of all the *Threatnings* in the BIBLE——*unleſs we put away the Evil of our Doings—unleſs we ceaſe to do Evil, and learn to do well*[b]. In order to which I ſhall,

In the *Second* Place, by way of APPLICATION, *more* particularly, offer ſomething that may ſerve for Direction to the *proper* Means for averting the Wrath of GOD, which ſeems to be gone forth for the PUNISHMENT of a WICKED WORLD. Now, nothing ſhort of a thorough REFORMATION, among *all* Ranks and Degrees of Men, will do it—And, therefore,

1. Let *Thoſe* conſider this EVENT, and *how*, and in *what* Degree, *they* ſtand chargeable with the Vices juſt mentioned; who, thro' the Providence of a bountiful God, are enabled to live in Plenty, without the Hazards of Trade, or the Labour of their Hands——Such as live at Eaſe, and know no End *almoſt* of their Riches.——I ſay, let *ſuch* conſider—that *they* are not entruſted with Theſe for their own Sakes, but, for the Honour of God—and the general Good of Mankind—And—*at length*—learn to uſe them accordingly.

For, if *they* employ them for *their* own Pleaſure, without any Regard to theſe ENDS, They ſadly abuſe them; and may expect, *hereafter*, to be dealt with as ſuch Abuſes deſerve. Oh! what a ſad Account will *thoſe* rich Men have to give, who ſquander away their Riches in ſenſual Delights; and pay no Regard to God in the Uſe of them.——Whoſe Ears are deaf to the Cries of the Poor,—and, who refuſe their Aſſiſtance to *Them* that are ready to periſh for Want of Bread.——If you think you have a Right to do what you pleaſe with them, you are *ſadly* miſtaken—For they are a *Truſt* committed unto you, and, WOE unto you—if you employ

[b] *Iſaiah* i. 16, 17.

employ them wrong.——Ye are only Stewards, and God will call you to account, both as to the Meaſure and the Manner in which you have laid them out. But, it is not *only* a Duty you owe to GOD, to employ them in a *proper* Manner and Meaſure too—It is a Piece of Juſtice you owe to *your* Brethren,—whether you conſider them as Chriſtians—as Men—or as Members of Society. And, in *each* of theſe Reſpects, there is a Voice in the preſent PROVIDENCE, which requires it at your Hands. The Laws of God, as well as the Rules of CIVIL SOCIETY make it neceſſary——Nay, the very REASON of Things requires it; ſeeing it is the Induſtry and Increaſe of the trading Part of the Kingdom, that hath raiſed your POSSESSIONS to their preſent Value—ſo far *beyond* what they were in the Days of your Forefathers; ſo that you are, in ſome Sort, indebted unto COMMERCE for what you poſſeſs; and THEREFORE, ought, *chearfully*, to lend a helping Hand to that Part of the Community, when it languiſheth—as—I fear—it will, by the preſent CALAMITY —— to which Conſiderations, I ſhall *only* add, by way of Motive—that it will be the *only* Way to make your Riches a Bleſſing, *viz.* to uſe them as God intended they ſhould be uſed. —— And, *beſides* the Pleaſure of doing Good to others, You will ſecure *unſpeakable* Advantages to Yourſelves —— both in TIME, and, throughout ETERNITY.———In the next Place——

2. Let thoſe conſider this EVENT, and ſee the Finger of GOD in it,———who are *more immediately* concerned, by reaſon of their Correſpondence, with that *unhappy* City—— And let them *impartially* examine themſelves, and ſee, how far, *they* may have contributed, to the drawing down of *this* Judgment. I ſpeak it not, as tho' they were the only Perſons; for, I *verily* believe, that it is for the SINS of the whole NATION, that this CALAMITY is come upon us. But, as I am, now, ſpeaking, more particularly unto *them*, I hope, they

they will take Admonition, as they ought, and, where *they* have done amiſs, do ſo no more. If, upon a Review of *what* is paſt, you are not guilty of any Thing,—or can find nothing to accuſe yourſelves of,—either with Reſpect to God or your Neighbour,—you have *no* Concern in *this* Reproof—But—if it be otherwiſe, with you—Then it is fit—nay it is our bounden Duty to reprove you, that you *may* be aſhamed, and learn to do better.——We have, of late, heard great Complaining in our Streets, of the great Hardſhips of the inferior Tradeſmen;—by that ſhameful Abatement in the Price of their Wares, which, *they* have been obliged, thro' Neceſſity, to make, and other Impoſitions, which have been laid upon them. [c] How well grounded thoſe Complaints are, is not my Buſineſs at preſent to inquire—Let *thoſe* ſee to it—againſt *whom*, the Complaint is made; but, SURELY, GOD will hear the Cry of the POOR, and avenge the Cauſe of the OPPRESSED.——Once more,

3. Let the Common Trader, who may, perhaps, labour under ſome Difficulty, by the Interruption of Trade, ſee the HAND of GOD in this EVENT.—Let *him* conſider his SINS, and put away *far* from him, all *Deceit* and *Injuſtice*, and every other *evil* Thing.——Let *him* purſue his Buſineſs with Induſtry, and depend upon GOD for a Bleſſing. Let *him* uſe the *Means*, which God hath given him, with SOBRIETY—look *well* to his own Family, and *provide Things honeſt in the Sight of all Men*—Let *him* not *dare* to ſpend his Profits upon his Luſts, in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, in Chambering and Wantonneſs, *nor* in any Kind of Wicked-

 neſs—

[c] The ſacred Rules of Juſtice and Equity require when a poor Man is obliged, thro' Neceſſity, to ſell his Wares, that the Buyer give him the ſame Price, that he would do, ſuppoſing that the Seller ſtood in no more Need of the Buyer's Money, than the Buyer of the Seller's Commodity. And therefore when one Man takes the Advantage of another's Poverty—it adds Inhumanity to Injuſtice——OPPRESSION to MISERY.

ness—Lest the Day of the LORD come upon *him* before *he* be aware—

2. And, let all of us, considering the *Judgments* of GOD, descend into our own Hearts, and see, what that *accurſed* Thing is in us, is, which hath contributed, to the drawing down of this CALAMITY upon the Nation; and, let us put it away, as ſoon as we find it—We have no Certainty of our Lives—any more than of our Poſſeſſions—And, therefore, let us not *dare* to live any longer, in a State of Enmity againſt God,—but—as we valne our own *eternal* Welfare—ſeek after Reconciliation thro' the BLOOD of the LAMB—Let us kiſs the Son, before he be *further* enflamed,—and we periſh—For bleſſed—and *truly* bleſſed—and *only* bleſſed—are *they* who ſubmit *themſelves* unto HIM.

FINIS.

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ness—Lest the Day of the LORD come upon *him* before *he* be aware.—

LORD.—And, let all of us, considering the *Judgments* of GOD, descend into our own Hearts, and see, what that *accursed* Thing, IN US, is, which hath contributed, to the drawing down of this CALAMITY upon the Nation; and, let us put it away, as soon as we find it—We have no Certainty of our Lives—any more than of our Possessions—And, therefore, let us not *dare* to live any longer, in a State of Enmity against GOD,—but—as we value our own *eternal* Welfare—seek after Reconciliation thro' the BLOOD of the LAMB—Let us kiss the Son, before he be *further* enflamed,—and we perish—For blessed—and *truly* blessed—and *only* blessed—are *they* who submit *themselves* unto HIM.

FINIS.

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